

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of controlling use of software programs on a computer including the steps of:

5 starting a bootstrap involving loading at least one software program providing basic services for the computer,

requesting an execution authorisation by each program to a licensing management system,

10 granting the authorisation according to a preliminary verification of licensing information indicative of an authorised condition of use of the program before completion of the bootstrap, and

15 revising the granted authorisation according to a complete verification of the licensing information after completion of the bootstrap.

2. The method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:

20 loading a basic module of the licensing management system before completion of the bootstrap, each authorisation being requested to and being granted by the basic module,

logging each request of authorisation,

25 loading a full module of the licensing management system after completion of the bootstrap, and

providing each logged request to the full module for revising the corresponding granted authorisation.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of requesting the authorisation is deferred until completion of the loading of the basic module.

5 4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the step of revising the granted authorisation includes:

10 sending a message indicative of the request to a further computer storing a digital license certificate for each program including the corresponding licensing information, and

verifying compliance of the request with the corresponding licence certificate.

15 5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the step of granting the authorisation includes verifying a local digital license certificate stored on the computer and including a simplified copy of the corresponding license certificate.

20 6. The method according to claim 5, further including the step of updating each local license certificate according to a new version thereof received from the further computer after completion of the bootstrap.

25 7. The method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:

monitoring operation of the computer for detecting a change in an execution environment of each program, and

30 revising the corresponding granted authorisation according to the detected change.

8. A computer program directly loadable into a working memory of a computer for performing the method of claim 1 when the program is run on the computer.

5 9. A program product including a computer readable medium on which the program of claim 8 is stored.

10. A method of controlling use of software programs on a computer including the steps of:

10 requesting an execution authorisation by each program to a licensing management system,

granting the authorisation according to a verification of licensing information indicative of an authorised condition of use of the program,

15 monitoring operation of the computer for detecting a change in an execution environment of the program, and

revising the granted authorisation according to the detected change.

20 11. A computer program directly loadable into a working memory of a computer for performing the method of claim 10 when the program is run on the computer.

25 12. A program product including a computer readable medium on which the program of claim 11 is stored.

30 13. A system for controlling use of software programs on a computer including a licensing management system and means for starting a bootstrap involving loading at least one software program providing basic services for the

computer, each program requesting an execution
authorisation to the licensing management system, wherein
the licensing management system includes means for
granting the authorisation according to a preliminary
5 verification of licensing information indicative of an
authorised condition of use of the program before
completion of the bootstrap, and means for revising the
granted authorisation according to a complete
verification of the licensing information after
10 completion of the bootstrap.

14. A system for controlling use of software programs on
a computer including a licensing management system, each
program requesting an execution authorisation to the
licensing management system and the licensing management
15 system granting the authorisation according to a
verification of licensing information indicative of an
authorised condition of use of the program, wherein the
system further includes means for monitoring operation of
the computer for detecting a change in an execution
20 environment of the program, the licensing management
system revising the granted authorisation according to
the detected change.